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Edited by Peter Duus

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THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF JAPAN

General editors

JOHN W. HALL, MARIUS B. JANSEN, MADOKA KANAI,
AND DENIS TWITCHETT

Volume 6
The Twentieth Century

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Cover illustration: Panorama. Edo and the Sumida River at the Ryogoku Bridge.

03.217 Japanese Ptg: Edo Ukiyoe school, Toyoharu, Utagawa (1735–1814).

Silk panel: 73.1 x 185.9 cms. Courtesy of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

GENERAL EDITORS' PREFACE

Since the beginning of this century the Cambridge histories have set a pattern in the English-reading world for multivolume series containing chapters written by specialists under the guidance of volume editors. Plans for a Cambridge history of Japan were begun in the 1970s and completed in 1978. The task was not to be easy. The details of Japanese history are not matters of common knowledge among Western historians. The cultural mode of Japan differs greatly from that of the West, and above all there are the daunting problems of terminology and language. In compensation, however, foreign scholars have been assisted by the remarkable achievements of the Japanese scholars during the last century in recasting their history in modern conceptual and methodological terms.

History has played a major role in Japanese culture and thought, and the Japanese record is long and full. Japan's rulers from ancient times have found legitimacy in tradition, both mythic and historic, and Japan's thinkers have probed for a national morality and system of values in their country's past. The importance of history was also emphasized in the continental cultural influences that entered Japan from early times. Its expression changed as the Japanese consciousness turned to questions of dynastic origin, as it came to reflect Buddhist views of time and reality, and as it sought justification for rule by the samurai estate. By the eighteenth century the successive need to explain the divinity of government, justify the ruler's place through his virtue and compassion, and interpret the flux of political change had resulted in the fashioning of a highly subjective fusion of Shinto, Buddhist, and Confucian norms.

In the nineteenth century the Japanese became familiar with Western forms of historical expression and felt the need to fit their national history into patterns of a larger world history. As the modern Japanese state took its place among other nations, Japanese history faced the task of reconciling a parochial past with a more catholic present. Historians familiarized themselves with European accounts of the course of

civilization and described Japan's nineteenth century turn from military to civilian bureaucratic rule under monarchical guidance as part of a larger, worldwide pattern. Buckle, Guizot, Spencer, and then Marx successively provided interpretative schema.

The twentieth-century ideology of the imperial nation state, however, operated to inhibit full play of universalism in historical interpretation. The growth and ideology of the imperial realm required caution on the part of historians, particularly with reference to Japanese origins.

Japan's defeat in World War II brought release from these inhibitions and for a time replaced them with compulsive denunciation of the pretensions of the imperial state. Soon the expansion of higher education brought changes in the size and variety of the Japanese scholarly world. Historical inquiry was now free to range widely. A new opening to the West brought lively interest in historical expressions in the West, and a historical profession that had become cautiously and expertly positivist began to rethink its material in terms of larger patterns.

At just this juncture the serious study of Japanese history began in the West. Before World War II the only distinguished general survey of Japanese history in English was G. B. Sansom's *Japan: A Short Cultural History*, first published in 1931 and still in print. English and American students of Japan, many trained in wartime language programs, were soon able to travel to Japan for study and participation with Japanese scholars in cooperative projects. International conferences and symposia produced volumes of essays that served as benchmarks of intellectual focus and technical advance. Within Japan itself an outpouring of historical scholarship, popular publishing, and historical romance heightened the historical consciousness of a nation aware of the dramatic changes of which it was witness.

In 1978 plans were adopted to produce this series on Japanese history as a way of taking stock of what has been learned. The present generation of Western historians can draw upon the solid foundations of the modern Japanese historical profession. The decision to limit the enterprise to six volumes meant that topics such as the history of art and literature, aspects of economics and technology and science, and the riches of local history would have to be left out. They too have been the beneficiaries of vigorous study and publication in Japan and in the Western world.

Multivolume series have appeared many times in Japanese since the beginning of the century, but until the 1960s the number of profession-

GENERAL EDITORS' PREFACE

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ally trained historians of Japan in the Western world was too small to sustain such an enterprise. Although that number has grown, the general editors have thought it best to draw on Japanese specialists for contributions in areas where they retain a clear authority. In such cases the act of translation itself involves a form of editorial cooperation that requires the skills of a trained historian whose name deserves acknowledgment.

The primary objective of the present series is to put before the English-reading audience as complete a record of Japanese history as possible. But the Japanese case attracts our attention for other reasons as well. To some it has seemed that the more we have come to know about Japan the more we are drawn to the apparent similarities with Western history. The long continuous course of Japan's historical record has tempted historians to look for resemblances between its patterns of political and social organization and those of the West. The rapid emergence of Japan's modern nation state has occupied the attention of comparative historians, both Japanese and Western. On the other hand, specialists are inclined to point out the dangers of being misled by seeming parallels.

The striking advances in our knowledge of Japan's past will continue and accelerate. Western historians of this great and complex subject will continue to grapple with it, and they must as Japan's world role becomes more prominent. The need for greater and deeper understanding of Japan will continue to be evident. Japanese history belongs to the world, not only as a right and necessity but also as a subject of compelling interest.

JOHN W. HALL
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PREFACE TO VOLUME 6

The twentieth century poses a problem for the historian. The actors on the historical stage are in the midst of an ongoing drama, and our observation of this drama, to say nothing of our understanding of it, is also in flux. Research on the history of twentieth-century Japan, much of it in the social sciences, seems to be expanding at an almost exponential rate. The study of the Japanese economy alone has become a major academic cottage industry in the past decade, engaging specialists both inside and outside the field of Japanese studies. By its very nature, then, a volume of this sort, concentrating on the twentieth century, is an exercise in obsolescence. Like the later volumes of the first Lord Acton's *Cambridge Modern History*, this volume is the most likely among those of the *Cambridge History of Japan* to require early revision.

Given this reality, it seemed wiser to plan the volume as a discursive guide to twentieth-century Japan than as a complete Baedeker with each site and vista along the way properly noted and catalogued. For example, there is less space, and hence less detail of coverage, devoted to political and diplomatic history than there might have been. But as there are many excellent monographs in English on these subjects, readers will not have trouble filling in the obvious gaps in the record. It may be more difficult for them to find succinct accounts of other subjects, particularly in economic, social, and intellectual history, and hence the contents err in their favor.

The volume is divided into four main sections: The first provides a general guide to the development of domestic politics, particularly the politics of representative institutions; the second deals with external relations, with the most emphasis on Japan's territorial expansion and aggrandizement on the Asian continent, as well as the consequences that flowed therefrom; the third section provides an overview of economic development during the twentieth century; and the final section deals with changes in the working and farming classes, which constituted the majority of the Japanese population until recently, as well as

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the conceptual or theoretical lenses through which intellectuals viewed these and other long-term changes. Clearly, much has been left out of this volume, not the least of which is a comprehensive treatment of changes in education, higher culture, the fine arts, and literature. But time is short, history long, and such truncation inevitable.

This volume uses conventional romanization for Japanese and Korean terms, but it stands by the old Wade–Giles system of romanization for Chinese terms. Because many scholars in Chinese studies now prefer to use the pinyin system, this practice may appear retrograde, if not outright imperialistic. However, most Japan specialists have not yet caught on to the new system, and hence all six volumes of the *Cambridge History of Japan* will rely on the old one. An alternative would have been to provide both Wade–Giles and pinyin romanization, but that seemed unnecessarily cumbersome. Chinese studies scholars offended by reliance on the Wade–Giles system should remember that it is also being used in the *Cambridge History of China*. Throughout the text, values expressed in billions are in American billions.

References mentioned in the footnotes or in the source notes of tables and charts will be found in the list of Works Cited at the end of the volume. The list comprises most major works in English on modern Japanese history.

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PETER DUUS

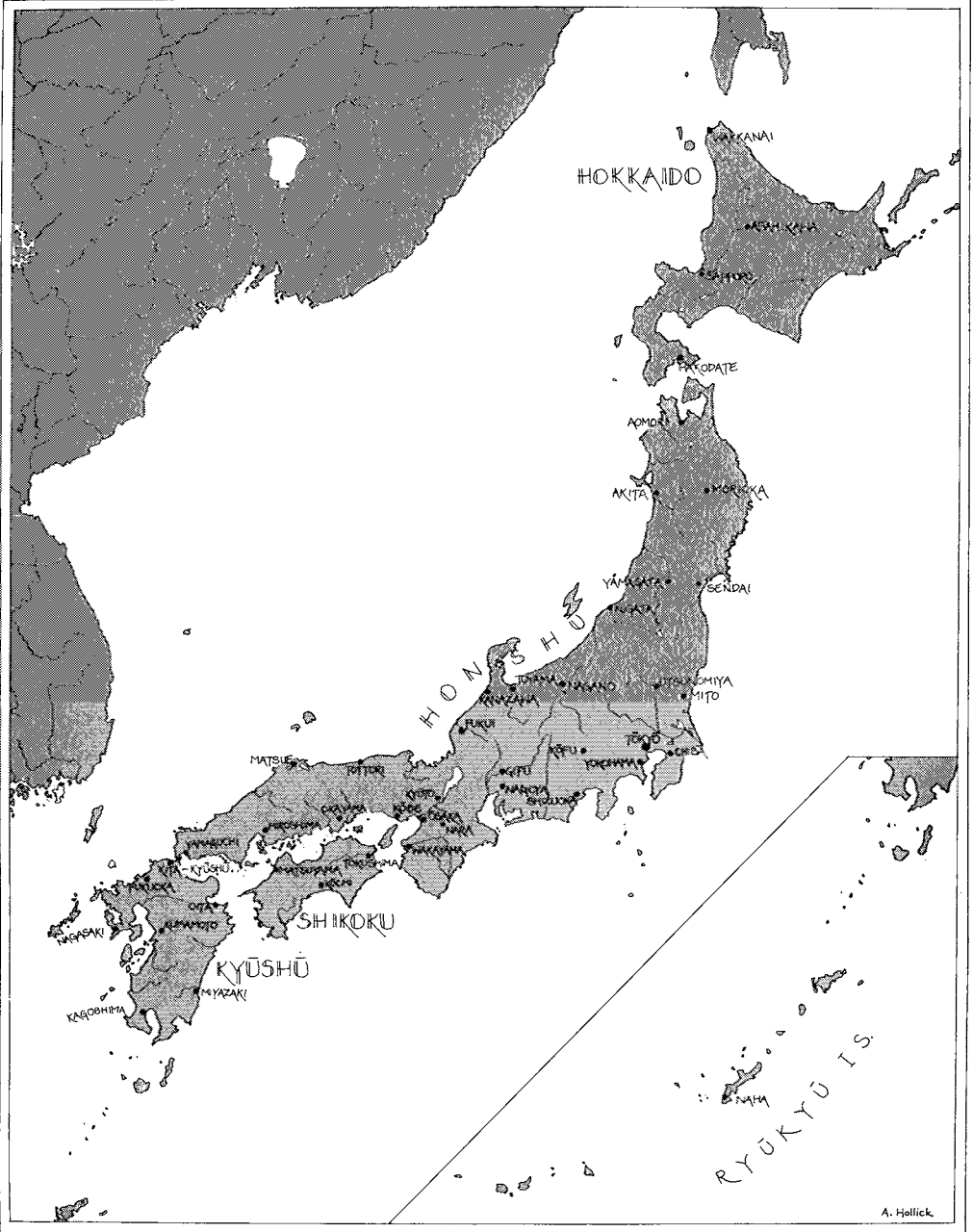
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